

Message Text

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ACTION EUR-12

INFO OCT-01 EURE-00 ISO-00 SSO-00 NSCE-00 USIE-00
INRE-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-04 H-02 INR-07 L-03
NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-02 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15 AID-05
IO-14 OES-07 ACDA-10 DLOS-09 /099 W
-----098073 271423Z /43

O R 271220Z JUN 77
FM AMEMBASSY ANKARA
TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 7965
INFO AMEMBASSY ATHENS
AMEMBASSY LONDON
AMEMBASSY NICOSIA
AMCONSUL ADANA
AMCONSUL ISTANBUL
AMCONSUL IZMIR
USMISSION NATO
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EUCOM

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E.O. 11652: NA
TAGS: PFOR, TU, GR, CY
SUBJECT: ECEVIT INTERVIEW WITH ACROPOLIS

1. SUMMARY: JUNE 27 TURKISH PRESS GIVES FRONT-PAGE TREATMENT TO INTERVIEW WITH PRIMIN ECEVIT PUBLISHED IN ATHENS DAILY ACROPOLIS. IN INTERVIEW, ECEVIT DISCUSSES CYPRUS SITUATION AND GREEK-TURKISH RELATIONS. WHILE REFUSING TO COMMIT HIMSELF TO ANY SPECIFIC POSITION UNTIL AFTER THE VOTE OF CONFIDENCE, ECEVIT SAID HE WILL ASSIGN THE HIGHEST PRIORITY TO SORTING OUT GREEK-TURKISH PROBLEMS. HE ALSO SAID HE WOULD BE PREPARED TO ESTABLISH A PERSONAL DIALOGUE WITH PRIMIN CARAMANLIS IN ORDER TO WORK OUT THE GENERAL POLITICAL FRAMEWORK UNDER WHICH THE OUTSTANDING PROBLEMS BETWEEN THE TWO NATIONS COULD BE RESOLVED. END SUMMARY

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2. THE FOLLOWING SUMMARIZES AN INTERVIEW BETWEEN PRIMIN ECEVIT AND ACROPOLIS REPORTER, PAUL CAMVYSSIS. MOST TURKISH NEWS-PAPERS JUNE 27 GAVE THE INTERVIEW FRONT-PAGE TREATMENT, AND SOME REPRINT WHAT IS REPORTED TO BE THE FULL TEXT.

3. IN RESPONSE TO A QUESTION CHALLENGING THE FAIRNESS OF THE CURRENT TERRITORIAL DIVISION IN CYPRUS, ECEVIT AVOIDED A DIRECT

ANSWER, HE SAID, HOWEVER, THAT HE ATTACHES GREAT IMPORTANCE TO RESOLVING THE CYPRUS PROBLEM AS SOON AS POSSIBLE AND THAT IF HE WINS THE VOTE OF CONFIDENCE, HIS GOVERNMENT WILL IMMEDIATELY ATTACK THE PROBLEM. ECEVIT SAID HE WAS PLEASED THAT A DIALOGUE HAD BEGUN BETWEEN DENKTAS AND MAKARIOS, AND HE BELIEVED THAT BOTH TURKEY AND GREECE SHOULD ENCOURAGE BOTH SIDES IN CYPRUS TO CONTINUE THE DIALOGUE. ECEVIT ALSO SAID THAT WHEN HE WAS PRIME MINISTER IN 1974, HE HAD DEVELOPED A PLAN FOR THE RESOLUTION OF THE CYPURS PROBLEM. AFTER THREE YEARS, HE WAS NOT SURE WHETHER THAT PLAN WOULD STILL BE APPLICABLE. NEVERTHELESS, HE SAID THE BASIC FORMULA -- AN INDEPENDENT FEDERAL STATE OF CYPRUS -- REMAINED VALID.

4. IN RESPONSE TO CAMVYSSIS' INVITATION TO COMMENT ON PRIMIN CARAMANLIS' ASSERTION THAT GREEK-TURKISH PROBLEMS HAD NOT BEEN RESOLVED BECAUSE OF TURKEY'S FAILURE TO KEEP ITS WORD, ECEVIT SAID THAT THE DEMIREL COALITION GOVERNMENT HAD BEEN UNABLE TO DO MANY THINGS BECAUSE OF ITS COMPOSITION. THEREFORE, HE SAID, THE FORMER GOVERNMENT'S ATTITUDE SHOULD BE INTERPRETED IN THE LIGHT OF ITS INTERNAL DIVISIONS. ITS FAILURE TO ACT WAS NOT PART OF A DELIBERATE EFFORT TO AVOID RESOLUTION OF THE PROBLEMS BETWEEN TURKEY AND GREECE. ECEVIT NOTED THAT TURKEY'S RELATIONS WITH THE EEC AND ITS "NATIONAL SECURITY ARRANGEMENTS" HAD ALSO BEEN IN SUSPENSE BECAUSE OF THE POLITICAL MAKE-UP OF THE GOVERNMENT. ECEVIT WENT ON TO SAY THAT HIS GOVERNMENT WOULD ATTACH SPECIAL IMPORTANCE TO THE ESTABLISHMENT OF CLOSE, FRIENDLY, AND COOPERATIVE RELATIONS

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BETWEEN TURKEY AND GREECE. HE SAID THAT TURKEY HAD BEEN IMPROVING ITS RELATIONS WITH ALL OF ITS NEIGHBORS EXCEPT ITS ALLY, GREECE, AND THAT THIS "ANOMALY" SHOULD BE CORRECTED AS SOON AS POSSIBLE. ECEVIT ASSERTED THAT THE PROBLEMS BETWEEN THE TWO COUNTRIES HAD NOT BEEN SOLVED BECAUSE THEY HAD FAILED TO ESTABLISH MUTUAL CONFIDENCE. HE SAID, "TURKISH PEOPLE COVET

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NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-02 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15 AID-05

OES-07 ACDA-10 DLOS-09 /099 W

-----098239 271423Z /43

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NOTHING OF GREECE, AND THE REPUBLICAN PEOPLE'S PARTY HAS NO SUCH COVETOUS FEELINGS. WE WOULDN'T DREAM OF SUCH FEELINGS." HE SAID THAT IF MUTUAL CONFIDENCE CAN BE ESTABLISHED, THE AEGEAN FLIGHT INFORMATION REGION (FIR) AND SEABED PROBLEMS COULD BE RESOLVED. ECEVIT SUGGESTED THAT THE FIR ISSUE IS A TECHNICAL ONE THAT CAN BE EASILY DEALT WITH. THE SEABED ISSUE MIGHT BE MORE DIFFICULT, HE SAID, BUT HE THOUGHT IT COULD BE SETTLED IN AN EQUITABLE WAY IF "WE ACCEPT THE GEOGRAPHIC AND HISTORIC FACT THAT THE AEGEAN BELONGS TO BOTH COUNTRIES." AS A STARTING POINT, HE SUGGESTED THE GUIDELINE THAT THE SEABED ISSUE SHOULD NEITHER INFLUENCE NOR BE INFLUENCED BY THE STATUS OF THE ISLANDS.

5. IN RESPONSE TO A QUESTION ABOUT PRIMIN CARAMANLIS' PROPOSAL THAT GREECE AND TURKEY SIGN A NON-AGGRESSION PACT, ECEVIT REFUSED TO COMMENT IN DETAIL UNTIL BEING FULLY BRIEFED BY UNCLASSIFIED

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THE MFA. HOWEVER, HE SAID, "IF WE TAKE OUR MEMBERSHIP IN THE SAME ALLIANCE SERIOUSLY, THERE WOULD BE NO REASON FOR SUCH A DOCUMENT." HE SAID HE WAS NOT NECESSARILY OPPOSED TO SUCH AN AGREEMENT BUT, BASED ON HIS PRESENT KNOWLEDGE, HE DIDN'T SEE THE NEED FOR ONE. HE ADDED HE HAD ALWAYS BEEN PREPARED TO DISCUSS ANY METHOD OF CREATING AN ATMOSPHERE OF MUTUAL CONFIDENCE BETWEEN THE TWO COUNTRIES. HE SAID THAT IN 1974 HE HAD PROPOSED TO PRIMIN CARAMANLIS THAT THEY MEET SOMEWHERE ON NEUTRAL GROUND TO DISCUSS THE PROBLEMS BETWEEN THE TWO COUNTRIES. CARAMANLIS HAD REJECTED THE IDEA BECUASE HE DID NOT CONSIDER IT TO BE AN OPPORTUNE TIME. "I RESPECT HIS JUDGMENT," ECEVIT SAID, "AFTER THE VOTE OF CONFIDENCE I SHALL CERTAINLY BE PREPARED TO START A DIALOGUE WITH GREECE AND, IF POSSIBLE, WITH MR CARAMANLIS AS SOON AS POSSIBLE." ECEVIT EXPLAINED THAT HE THOUGHT IT WAS NECESSARY TO ESTABLISH A FRUITFUL DIALOGUE

BETWEEN THE TWO LEADERS BECUASE IMPORTANT QUESTIONS BETWEEN
TWO COUNTRIES COULD NOT BE RESOLVED AT THE TECHNICAL LEVEL. FIRST,
HE SAID, POLITICAL LEADERS SHOULD SET THE OBJECTIVES AND FRAMEWORK.
THE TECHNICIANS COULD THEN WORK OUT THE DETAILS ON THE BASIS OF
THOSE AGREED OUTLINES.

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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 01-Jan-1994 12:00:00 am
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: TEXT, FOREIGN RELATIONS, PRESS CONFERENCES, FOREIGN POLICY POSITION
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Sent Date: 27-Jun-1977 12:00:00 am
Decaption Date: 01-Jan-1960 12:00:00 am
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: n/a
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment:
Disposition Date: 01-Jan-1960 12:00:00 am
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
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Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: N/A
Errors: N/A
Expiration:
Film Number: D770228-1217
Format: TEL
From: ANKARA
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
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Legacy Key: link1977/newtext/t19770615/aaaaaneq.tel
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Litigation Code IDs:
Litigation Codes:
Litigation History:
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Office: ACTION EUR
Original Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
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Previous Channel Indicators: n/a
Previous Classification: n/a
Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
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Retention: 0
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Content Flags:
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Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review Media Identifier:
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
SAS ID: 2024898
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: ECEVIT INTERVIEW WITH ACROPOLIS
TAGS: PFOR, TU, GR, CY, (ECEVIT, BULENT)
To: STATE
Type: TE
vdkgvwkey: odhc://SAS/SAS.dbo.SAS_Docs/8bbb7e76-c288-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc
Review Markings:
Margaret P. Grafeld
Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
22 May 2009
Markings: Margaret P. Grafeld Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 22 May 2009